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A SHORT
RELATION

OF THE

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Brave Exploits

OF THE

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And of God's miraculous Providence
in their Preservation in the late War
against the *French* in *Piedmont*.

Taken from, and attested by some of their
Chief Commanders now in *London*.

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By S.D'Assigny, a Lover of his King and Country.

L O N D O N,

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Printed for A. Baldwin in Warwick-lane. 1699.

Vaudois.—Relation of the Brave Exploits of the Vaudois, and
of God's Miraculous Providence in their Preservation in the
Late War against the French in Piedmont, by S. D'Assigny,
4to. sewed, 5s. 6d. - - - 1699



The late Brave E X P L O I T S *of the*
V A L D O I S.

THE *Vandois* are a People inhabiting the Vallies of the *Alpes* between *France* and *Italy*: They derive their Name from *Vallis* a Valley, because they are all Vallies where they inhabit, surrounded with high and steep Mountains; and not from *Peter Waldo*, as some imagine, a rich Merchant of *Lions*, who being invited with others to a sumptuous Feast, one of the Company was struck suddenly dead, which made such an Impression upon the Mind of this sober Man, that he went and sold his Estate, distributed it to the Poor, and applied himself the rest of his days not only to the study of the Word of God, but also to the communicating and preaching it to others. It seems, by the Relation that we have from the Romish Writers of those days, this *Waldo* approved not the Errors and Corruptions of the Church and Clergy of *Rome*: But in the beginning of those Abominations, this good Man was one of the most remarkable Champions of the Truth; for he publickly declared against the horrid Abuses at that time and a little before crept into the Romish Church; for which reason, being persecuted by his Enemies, he fled into these Vallies, and was received as one of their most zealous and learned Preachers. It is generally confest, and by all the learned Men in that Neighbourhood, that these *Vandois* never would suffer themselves to be corrupted by, nor drawn into the Errors of the Church of *Rome*: And that from the time of the holy Apostles they have always been of the same Religion that they are of now. In the beginning of our general Reformation we know that they readily imbraced the Doctrines of *Calvin* and *Zwinglius*, noted and famous Reformers,

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RELATIVE EXPLOITS

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And of God's Miraculous Providence in their Preservation in the
Late War against the French in Piedmont.

Taken from, and added by, John
Chief Commandant, now in London.



By S. D'Assigny, late of the Army of Piedmont, and Country.

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Printed for A. Baldwin in Westminster.

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mers; and joyning themselves to their Communion, have ever since been owned as Brethren.

—Now I judg, that tho there may have been in these Vallies always some professing their Religion, yet I believe that this remote Corner of the World never began to be populous, and to be improved till about the Year 1100. after Christ, when the Romish Religion sent such vast Armies, pretendedly against the Infidels, to destroy the *Albigenses* in *Provence*, and the adjacent Countries. The Remnant of these poor Christians, who escaped from the Fury of the Sword, fled into these Vallies naturally fortified, and there sustained themselves and Families by their Industry and Labours, by improving and manuring every Corner in the most advantageous manner. However, it is most certain, that they and their Religion are very antient; that none can find upon Record when they first began; and that they have continued there never molested till our late Ages; that their former Princes were always very kind to them, and they very dutiful to the Dukes of *Savoy*. But about the Year 1654. their Numbers being strangely increased, some of them, by the Blessing of God and their honest Labours, attained to that Wealth as to purchase some Estates in the lower Parts of *Savoy*: which being taken notice of by the Enemy, it caused them to sollicite the Duke to command them to go to Mass; upon their refusal he banished them out of their Habitations and Estates. Some of them in 1655. took up Arms, and courageously defended themselves against the Duke's Power assisted by the *French*: They killed in diverse Rencounters many thousands of their Enemies with little or no Loss, and were led by Capt. *Jametz* and others. And if they had continued in a defiance of their Enemies, all united together, they might probably have continued with Success: But what their Adversaries could not accomplish by Strength, they endeavoured to perform by Cunning. They pretended to grant them Peace, and under that colour they got into their Vallies, burnt and kill'd those poor credulous People. Sir *Samuel Morland*, sent thither by the late Protector *Cromwell*, hath left us a *Memorandum* of the barbarous Cruelties of the Papists upon these poor naked Christians: Some they broil'd alive, some they cast into burning Furnaces, others they forc'd down the steep Rocks; some

some they dismember'd, others they dragg'd about the Streets with Mules till their Brains were dash'd out, others they hang'd about the Country. In short, whatsoever Barbarity and savage Cruelty could invent, they inflicted upon these innocent People. We have a List of the Names of such as suffered Martyrdom for their Religion, and were put to Death at that time by several kinds of Torments. At last the small Remains took up Arms again, and retreated into the most fortified Places, where in sight of their Enemies they continued till a Peace was mediated for them by the Protestant Princes of *Germany*, and the *Switz* Cantons. And this is remarkable, that tho these poor *Vaudois* were always faithful to their Dukes, and never rebell'd against them for all the Hardships that were put upon them till denied the liberty of their Religion; yet their Enemies published abroad, that the Severity of their Treatment was for Rebellion, and not upon the least account of Religion: Neither would they own any of the Cruelties exercised and committed by their Agents as true.

My purpose at this present is, to give a punctual account of what was acted amongst these our poor Brethren since the Year 1686. Some Years before, the violent Persecution all over *France* had made a grievous Ravage and a terrible Destruction: The French King had burnt up the Protestant Churches, forc'd them to abjure and renounce their Religion; obliged them to go to Mass, and sign a Renunciation; such as refused were plundered by the Dragoons, or driven to seek Safety in foreign Countries. The Persecution rested not in *France*, but past over the *Alps* amongst these *Vaudois*, who also felt the Cruelty of their restless Enemies.

There were three great Vallies inhabited by these People, to which belonged these several Churches here named.

In the Valley of *Lucerne* were *Bobî, Vilar, la Tour, Angrogne, St. John Reras, Prarustin*, and *Rocheplate*, all populous Congregations, having their several Churches erected, and their several Ministers.

In the Valley of *Perouse* were the following Congregations, *Pramol, St. Germain, Vilar, Pinache, La Chappel, Pomare*, and *Arvers de Pinache*.

In the Valley of *St. Martin* were these Churches, *Le Temple*, *Ville Seche*, *Riotclaret*, *Bovile fiet*, *La Maneille*, *Marcel Prats*, and *Rodoret*.

There is another Valley called *Pragelas*, but that is under the French Dominion, within the Province of *Dauphine*, and not under the Duke of *Savoy*.

The French King sent to the Duke to require him to banish and persecute his Subjects in these three Vallies: He began in obedience to the Orders of the Court of *France*, to deny them the Liberty of their Religion, and to command them to go to Mass. When they could not comply with these Injunctions, they were ordered to depart out of their Country with their Wives and Children; and several other Severities were imposed upon them. This happen'd about the ninth of *May* 1686. It is imagined that the French King, having vast Designs of invading *Italy*, was afraid that these courageous *Vandois* would put a stop to the passage of his Troops in their March, which they could easily do if they were but countenanced by the Authority of their Prince, and had but his Warrant to justify their Arms. This fear being the more increased by the Odium the French King knew he had incurred for his Violences upon their Brethren of the same Religion, his natural Subjects, he sought also their ruin, and strived to have them expelled out of these Vallies: for that intent Proclamations were dispatch'd one after another in the Duke's Name, to command all those that would not join to the Communion of *Rome*, to depart out of the Vallies within such a time. When the Duke found no ready Obedience to his Orders, he marched with a considerable Army to oblige them by force. The Inhabitants at first began to resist, and for three days defended the Passes against the Duke's whole Army, he being there in Person at *Angrogne* in the Valley of *Lucerne*. Divers Skirmishes happened between them, where many of the Duke's Army were killed, but very few of the Protestants. At the same time another Brigade of French under a French General assaulted the *Vandois* of *St. Germain* with no success. They defended themselves so well, that neither the Duke nor the French Forces could make any Progress against these Country-People. At last the Duke sent to parley with some of their Chief-

Chieftains, and by fair means perswaded them to yield to his Mercy, with Promises of Kindness and Liberty: But as soon as his Troops were enter'd into the Vallies, and had possess'd themselves of the strong Places, they plundered the Goods of the Inhabitants, and drove them away in great Companies, and shut them, the Men and the Women with their little Infants, into thirteen Prisons: Two thousand of the bigger Children were violently taken from their Parents, and disposed of at the Pleasure of the Commanders. In the Prisons they were famished to Death, killed with Cold and Want, denied all Conveniences of Life, and several were by cruel Usage destroyed; insomuch that within a few Weeks eleven hundred of these poor naked Wretches, who had been stript by the Army of their Clothes, plundered of their Substance and Estates, and reduced to a sad Condition, died miserably. And to hasten their Deaths, and lessen their Numbers, they made use of several violent methods. They fed them with Bread and Water, and mingled amongst the Bread hot Lime, to burn their Guts and poison them. Some were put to death in Prison by strangling, and some by other kinds of Barbarity. It may be these Particulars were concealed from the Duke's knowledge: But there was nothing of Inhumanity left unpractised on these unhappy People when they were in their Enemies hands. There wanted not Agents, excited by a Popish Zeal, to afflict and persecute, to torment and plague these poor Christians.

When the Duke heard of the great Mortality that was amongst these poor People, for fear the rest should all perish in their Confinement, and bring an Odium upon him and his Government, or from some other Motive, it may be of Compassion, he ordered the Prisons to be opened, and commanded them all in the depth of Winter to depart forthwith out of his Dominions: They marched naked and half starved, sick, and in a lamentable condition, to the City of Geneva, where the Citizens shewed them all the Kindness and Compassion of Brethren: They immediately clothed them, received and harbour'd them in their Houses, fed and healed them that were wounded; and provided for them in the best manner that their Abilities and Circumstances would permit. Their Charity to these

these poor Protestants was most remarkable, and much taken notice of by the French King and his Agents, who were so angry at their civil Reception, that they signified to the Magistrates, that it was their King's Pleasure they should send away all those Refugees out of their Territories. Thus did the French Cruelty follow them into foreign Countries. The poor Souls were driven from thence into *Switzerland*, where the Cantons were so kind that they entertain'd them, and provided for them all Necessaries during three Years and a half: And tho the Country is but poor, they willingly extended their Charity to these distressed Protestants in a notable manner, till they resolved to return by force into their Vallies.

But one Passage I must not forget, of the extraordinary Valour and Resolution of forty two Men in the Valley of *Lucern*, and twenty five others in that of *St. Martin*, who seeing what Cruelties were exercised by the Army against their Neighbours and Brethren, and what they were likely to expect from the enraged Papists if they should fall into their hands, agreed together to post themselves in some place of difficult access, and there to sell their Lives at a dear rate, not out of any hopes of Safety or Escape. Accordingly with their Arms and Ammunition the two Parties got away from the furious Army entering into the Vallies. And when they were assaulted, without the loss of one Man, they killed some hundreds of the Enemy: So that the French and Savoyards despaired of being able to force them. At last by the Duke's orders his Officers began to treat with them to surrender; Articles were agreed upon, that they should be all safely conducted through the Duke's Territories with Bag and Baggage, and with their Arms, and provided with all things necessary for their Passage as far as the City of *Geneva*. And because they were resolved not to trust the Faith of Papists upon their bare Parol, they required Hostages, which also were granted, to secure the performance of the Articles. A remarkable Courage, and a brave Resolution! What might not all the Inhabitants of those Vallies have done, if they had but taken the same measures in the beginning before the Army had enter'd, and before they had been plunder'd and ruined? I know no reason
for

for a Community of Men to deliver themselves to an apparent Death and Destruction, as in such a case as this, upon the account of Loyalty to their Prince. 'Tis a real betraying the true Cause of God and Religion; to suffer our selves to be exterminated and expell'd out of a Country and Nation by Papists, when we are in a Power to defend our selves: And not to make use of the opportunity, when God, Providence and the Laws of the Land inable us, and Necessity requires us to employ it, is a folly, if not a madness, that no pretence of Conscience or Loyalty can excuse. Martyrdom is only seasonable when the Publick is not concerned, and we are singled out by Providence to seal the Truth of our Profession. But shall a Kingdom or publick Society forsake their Safety and Religion, and deliver all that is sacred and dear unto them in the World, and their Wives and Childrens Lives and Consciences into the barbarous hands of a company of unreasonable Men, warranted by a bigotted Prince? Shall we forget all our Obligations to God and Nature, and suffer a foolish Loyalty to carry us away to a certain Destruction, when we may lawfully prevent it by Resolution and Courage? Whatever have been the Doctrines preached and published in the former Reigns, of Non-resistance and Passive Obedience, I could never understand that Christ and his blessed Apostles had ever a design to make us such Fools in Religion. Indeed Reason and Christianity teach us, that we are to prefer a greater Interest to a lesser, the Peace and Quiet of the Publick to our own Safety and Preservation: and that when it is the Will of Providence to separate us to be Martyrs, we are then to express our Courage in suffering patiently, as well as we ought in other cases to express it by defending our selves manfully. And I cannot but take notice, that amongst the Worthies and Celestial Heroes mentioned by the Apostle to the *Hebrews*, there were as many or more, who through Faith subdued Kingdoms, wrought Righteousness, obtained Promises, stopped the Mouths of Lions, quenched the Violence of Fire, escaped the Edg of the Sword, out of Weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the Armies of the Aliens. I say, there were more of these than of those other sort of

Men who were stoned, were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the Sword; and wandered about in Sheepskins and Goat-Skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented. To make all Christianity to consist in a foolish suffering, in an unreasonable Patience, is to make us forget and neglect two capital Vertues that we are by the Rules of our holy Religion to practice and observe, I mean Prudence and Fortitude. Besides, the Success with which God is pleased to crown the vertuous and resolute Endeavours of his courageous Servants, as in the case of this handful of Men, who by their Valour purchased to themselves Safety beyond expectation, is no small Encouragement to their surviving Brethren, to follow their vertuous Example in such cases, and in times of danger. 'Tis usual, I confess, for the Idolizers of Sovereign Power to brand such Men with Rebellion, because they would willingly exercise their Tyrannical Pleasure upon them without controul, and at a cheaper rate. But if we take notice that the most innocent Actions, and the noblest Deeds are usually sullied over and black'd by the Envy and Malice of Men, we shall find reason enough to exempt from this Imputation a great many, and our Kingdom in particular, in relation to the late Revolution. When Necessity, Self-preservation, and the Vindication of the Laws and Religion of a Country in visible danger to be overturned, drive Men and a whole Nation, and those who are intrusted with the Government as well as the Prince, to seek a Remedy in Arms, Can such an Act be charg'd with Rebellion? All Opposition of lawful Monarchs their illegal Commands, is neither rebellious nor criminal before God. A whole Nation ought not to be sacrific'd to the Fury and Pleasure of one Man, who by the reasonable Constitution and Intent of all Government, owes himself, Life and Family to the Publick Good of the Community. But this is a Digression from the Subject in hand, only to vindicate these poor Men, and our present Government from the base Calumnies of our Adversaries at home and abroad. I return to my Relation of

These two and forty, and five and twenty, having thus secured themselves by Hostages that were deliver'd to them by the Duke's Order, they join'd together, and were safely conducted

to *Geneva*, where they continued, till with the rest of their Brethren they were conveyed into *Switzerland*, and kindly entertained by the Protestant Cantons, *Basle*, *Bern*, and *Zurich*. But their own daily Necessities, and the Poverty of the Country, numerous Inhabitants, tho' civil, and extreme charitable to them, could not but make them think of transplanting themselves into some other Country. Providence offered them a fair Invitation to return into their Vallies: The Duke of *Savoy* finding the Designs of *France* tending to the Oppression of all the Neighbouring Princes, was inclinable to favour the Confederates against the exorbitant Power of *Lewis*, tho' he declared not himself till afterwards, and by that means he was not averse to the Restoration of the *Vandois*, and perhaps willing of the Assistance of such brave Men against *Pignerol*, and other adjacent Garisons under the French Jurisdiction. About six hundred of these *Vandois* got together privately in a Wood of *Switzerland*, commonly called *Nions*, where they mustered and rendezvoused, and chose a Person of known Zeal, Skill, Integrity and Courage, whose Name, for his Valour and Sufferings, deserves to be transmitted to Posterity; 'twas a Minister of their Vallies called Monsieur *Henry Arnold*, who was surnamed *La Tour*: He first took an occasion to lay before them the Cruelty of their Enemies, the Necessities to which they and their Families were reduced, the Opportunity of recovering their own Country, the Cowardise and Cruelties of their Adversaries, their own former Successes and brave Exploits, and the Blessing of God that would infallibly second their virtuous and lawful Endeavours: And by this Discourse, and by a zealous Prayer to God to assist them in their need, he animated them in such a manner, that they resolved to value neither Numbers nor Enemies, but to march against all Opposition. They were privately furnished by the Agents of some of the Confederates, then in that Country, with Arms and Ammunition, and with Barks to carry them over the Lake *Lemane* or of *Geneva*, that they might go the straightest and most probable way into their Vallies. It was then the Month of *August* when they were transported over the Water into the French Dominions into *Dauphiné*: The Country took the Alarm at the landing of so many armed Men; and the Marquis de *la Roche* a

French Commander, having notice of their Design, got together about three or four thousand of the Regular Troops, besides the Militia of the Country, to stop their Passage: Accordingly he posted himself behind Retrenchments, at a noted Bridg over which they must needs pass, which leads over the River *La Doire*, the Name of the Bridg is *Salebertram* in *Dauphiné*. The Marquess waited for them in his hasty Fortifications with all his Men, being Infantry, ready to dispute the Passage. Monsieur *de la Tour*, the General or Colonel of the *Vandois*, had divided his handful of Men into Companies, and appointed over each such resolute and stout Officers as could act as well as speak, and shew an Example of undaunted Courage to the rest. The Dispute lasted some hours between the Marquess and the *Vandois*, but at last Monsieur *de la Tour* marches over the Bridg, and at the head of his Party forces their Trenches, wounds the Marquess in two places in his right Arm, kills about 500 Men, and disables about as many more, and forc'd all the rest to run away to save themselves. The Marquess fled to *Briançon*; but thinking himself not safe so near the Victors, and fearing perhaps that they would attempt to plunder a neighbouring Town, he passed thence to *Ambrun*, afterwards to *Gap*, and from thence went to *Grenoble* to be cured of his Wounds, and secure himself. The *Vandois* having clothed themselves with the Spoils of the dead and wounded, proceeded in their Journey, having lost in this Action only 22 of their Number: so visible, or rather miraculous was the Hand of God in their Preservation! They might have taken and plundered the next Towns forsaken by the flying Marquess, but their purpose was not to invade other Mens Rights, but only to recover their own. They marched, after they had refreshed themselves, and taken care of their wounded Comrades, straight to the Valley of *Pragellas*, which we told you was within the French Dominions in *Dauphiné*. They met with no Opposition after the Victory, which cleared their Passage to the Valley of *St. Martin*, where the Savoyards having the advantage of narrow Passages and steep Mountains, began to oppose them at the Entrance of the Valley. For when the *Vandois* had been expell'd, their Lands were sold and delivered over to other Subjects of the Duke's, who took Possession of their Houses and Habitations, and had sowed their

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their Lands with Corn; but before they could reap and carry it away, these, unwelcome Guests the old Proprietors came back to remove them, and drive them out. Notwithstanding all the Opposition, Monsieur *La Tour* with his stout Party recovers first all the Valley of *St. Martin*, and commanded from thence the Usurpers and Strangers; and having cleared that Valley, he went from thence to *Lucern* and *Perouse*, and within a few days ('tis almost incredible) maugre all the Opposition of the French Power, and the Inhabitants of *Savoy*, this small Company with little loss of Men gained all their Vallies, drove from thence all Papists with their Priests and Friars, to the great admiration of their Neighbours. *Xenophon's* March through *Asia* is not more wonderful than this of Monsieur *La Tour* into the Vallies of *Piedmont*. Monsieur *de Chatillon's* Escape and safe Retreat with his brave Companions through the middle of *France*, after the total defeat of the *German* Army in the day of *Henry* the Third, related by *Davila*, is not more strange than this, nor to be compared to the Success of Monsieur *La Tour*: To encounter with such a strong Opposition, so numerous a Party, with such a disadvantage of a River and Trenches, and a narrow Bridge, to overcome such vast Numbers with such a handful of Men, and with so small a loss, we must needs confess that the Action is unaccountable, if it were not that we know that all Victory depends upon God, and that he can give it to a small number as well as a great, and that Bullets have their Commission from above, and that without a Warrant from him who disposes of our Lives, they cannot harm us. Now we must take notice, that these valiant Men having a good Cause took good measures: They had a Law amongst themselves not to molest or hurt any but such as opposed them in their March, never to strike the first stroke, but to be upon the defensive part, and to pay for whatsoever they took from the Country People. So that the *French* Subjects lost not so much as a Hen or a Cock in all their March. As soon as they were arrived, and had driven away the Strangers, they began to preach again in their several Churches. Monsieur *La Tour* was the first who, having restored them by the Divine Assistance to their Country, began with a Thanksgiving Sermon to the Lord of Victory, and concluded with an Exhortation to continue stout and steadfast to their Religion.

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and Cause. Now these Churches had been converted by the Papists to the saying of Mass, which Abomination was by their recovery of the Vallies totally excluded.

This strange Attempt and wonderful Success of this little Number was heard at the Court of *France* with Amazement, and the Duke of *Savoy* could not but be startled at it. But Orders were immediately given to assist the Duke in expelling these new Guests. Monsieur *Catinat* the French General had a Command to send Troops to join with the Duke's Party: He sent a Reinforcement of Men considerable. When the *Vandois* heard of the coming of such a strong Party, some out of fear, having been Subjects of *France*, deserted and went away from the Body: And the rest considering their number, which was but few, for there remained but 367. and of them there were 12 very old Men, and 14 Youths, and some Country Fellows who never handled Gun nor Sword, to secure themselves retreated to the strongest place they could think upon, which was in the Valley of *St. Martin*, a certain Mountain not far from the Borders of *France*, named *Balsille*, where on the top they began to intrench themselves with three or four Retrenchments one within another, and there they dig'd Habitations in the ground to shelter them from the Cold and the Snow, having Pallisado's round to defend themselves when they should be assaulted, and to prevent sudden Attempts. 'Twas not long before they saw the Enemy marching against them: But in this place they continued about eight Months with continual Skirmishes with the French. They commonly reckon eighteen several Assaults that were made upon them with Regular Troops, and they as often defended themselves with good Success.

'Tis remarkable that the Enemy never came upon them, but left behind four or five hundred dead or disabled, but the *Vandois* never had above three or four killed and wounded. Now 'tis strange that such a small Party, who had no dependance upon any earthly Power, nor no expectation of Assistance but from God, should undertake an open War against two powerful Princes united, of *Savoy* and *France*, and in such a place that they could never think of escaping, but must in all probability be cut in pieces: Yet such was their Success, and the
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Divine Preservation, that the Power of *France* and *Savoy* never attempted upon them, but went away with considerable loss. Nay, when they saw that their Muskets made no Impression upon them, they caused their Cannon to be brought from *Pigneral*, and in five hours time discharged against this handful of Protestants 114 Cannon-shot without the least damage to any of them.

'Tis to be observed, to terrify the Enemy the more, when they had beaten them off, the *Vandois* did not only strip the Dead and take the Plunder of the Field, but they used to cut off the Heads of the destroy'd Enemy, and stick them round the Pallisado's, that their Comrades might perceive their Loss, and see what they were to expect from such brave Men.

We must not forget a wonderful Act of Providence in providing for these poor People in such a barren Country. The Savoyards had sown the ground with Corn before their departure, but could have no time to reap the same, because of the unexpected coming of these unwelcome Guests, who drove them immediately out; they found therefore a great quantity of good Corn not reaped, which, as they had occasion for it, they took to sustain themselves: But when the Enemy came upon them they had not time to make Provision; so that their chief business was to handle their Arms, and to defend themselves in their high Retreat. By this means it happened that the Corn remained all the Winter upon the ground, where they found it always fit for Service when they wanted; nay, some, they affirm, continued 18 Months without any damage, both Wheat, Rye and Barley they gathered in *February*, *March* and *April* following, and made good Bread of it to their great Comfort. This is attested by Monsieur *Arnold* and others. By this we may see what God can do for the Assistance and Relief of his People who trust in him. And it happened before they gathered the last, that a Snow fell upon the ground and Corn and covered it, but after followed some dry and hot Breezes that hardned the Corn, and made it fit for use in the Months of *February* and *April*: So that some continued ripe upon the ground several Months without damage. So unexpectedly did the Providence of God provide for them in their forlorn Condition, in a Country where they could have no
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Supply

Supply from the Neighbourhood, being besieged by a powerful Army.

Now, in these several Assaults, Monsieur *Catinat* himself came several times, and Monsieur *Fauguieres*, two of the chief Commanders of the French Army, with considerable Parties to assault and root out this small handful of Men. At last there came an Order from the Court of *France* to make another Attempt upon them, and to destroy them, and give no Quarter. In order to such a Design Monsieur *Parat*, a bold and resolute Officer of the French Army, was nominated to command the Party. Before their departure from *Pignerol*, they caused to be proclaimed about the City, That if any would have the Satisfaction to see the last of the *Barbets* (a Nick-name given to the *Vandois* because they used to wear long Beards) that they should go into the Vallies about the next day at Noon, and there they should see them all hanging by Couples together. For that purpose Monsieur *Parat* had provided and brought with him a Hang-man from *Pignerol* with a great many Ropes, to execute these poor Men. The Enemy was so numerous, that they surrounded the Mountain of *Balsille*, and came upon these distressed Protestants from all parts at one time; yet they manfully defended themselves all day, and at a certain Avenue they cast down some Trees with the Boughs towards the Enemy, having filled up the Intervals between the Boughs with great Stones. Monsieur *Parat* at the head of his Company came furiously on, but being desperately wounded, he himself was taken Prisoner, and about 1500 killed upon the place, with the loss of two killed, and two or three disabled of the *Vandois*: Whereas at the Assault Orders were given to spare none, and to allow no Quarter. The French never attempted upon them under 12000 Men, yet so wonderful was God's Protection, that all their Endeavours were to no purpose.

But these poor Creatures thus besieged, when they saw themselves surrounded by the Enemy, after they had stoutly defended themselves a whole day, resolved upon a desperate Attempt to escape in the night out of their Fastness by the most private way: And they were encouraged to this Undertaking by the joyful News that their Duke had declared for the Confederates. To put this Design in execution, they began their

their March in the dead time of the Night, over high Rocks and Mountains, where they were obliged to lift up and hand one another: It had been dangerous to go that way in the Day-time, but much more in the Night; yet so favourable was God to these his distressed Servants, that they escaped safe without any damage over this strange way, and within Pistol-shot of some of the Enemies Guards, unperceived: They marched with all speed over the tops of the Mountains to *Rodoret*, and from thence to *Prals* and *Pramol*, and from thence to *Lucern*, where they met with Assistance: For when their Brethren had understood by the common Fame of their brave Actions, and that they were escaped out of the hands of their Enemies, there came to them to make up the Number of between three or four thousand into the Valley of *Lucern*. With this Number they stopt the Progress of the French Army of Monsieur *Catinat*, and kept them out of the low Country till a greater Reinforcement came from *France*: They were so stout and couragious, that they obliged all the French Country, as far as *Ambrun* in *Dauphinè*, to pay them Contributions. They levied yearly 14000 Livres, with which Money they sustained themselves during seven years that they were engaged against the French. Neither could the French Army make any progress into *Savoy*; for from *Nice* to *Pignerol* all the Passages were kept by these *Vandois* and French Refugees. If the rest of the Confederate Army had behaved themselves in the same manner, not one French-man had escaped alive out of that Country. The Duke of *Savoy* acknowledg'd that they had done him great Services, that they were brave and worthy Men: Yet now at the Command of the French Court he hath issued forth his Proclamations to order that all such Persons as were not born within the Vallies of *Lucern* and *St. Martin*, should within two Months depart out of the Country with their Wives and Children, and that all Protestants should within the same time leave the Valley of *Perouse*. Upon this Order, 3000 prepared themselves to depart; for it was a vain Presumption to think to defend themselves any longer against the Power of *France* united with *Savoy*. They left therefore the Country and march'd with their Families to their antientest and most safe Retreat, viz. to *Genova*, and from thence they returned into

Switzerland; where being too numerous for that barren Country, they made their Addresses to the Protestant Princes of *Europe*. They of *Germany* have invited them to come and inhabit their Country. The Duke of *Wirtemberg* and *Darmstadt*, and the Prince of *Hesse-Cassel* have sent for them, and promised to allow them Habitations where they may live with freedom of Conscience: Several Families are therefore departing to *Wirtemberg*, to *Darmstadt*, to *Hamburg*, to *Hanover*, to *Hesse-Cassel*, and to *Brandenburg*, to repeople certain Places and Villages destroyed during the late War with *France*. For such has been their Rage and Fury in that miserable Country, not only to put to death the Inhabitants in divers places, but also to burn the Houses; and many flourishing Towns and Cities have been reduced to Ashes: *Spires*, *Manheim*, *Heidelberg*, and others are Witnesses of the French Barbarity.

The number of these our Brethren who are now intending to transplant themselves into *Germany* are reckoned to be about seven or eight thousand Men, Women and Children: for they are not only of the Vallies, but other French Refugees of *France*, who have forsaken, and are fled out of their Country for Conscience and Religion sake. We must take notice that yet in the Vallies there remains about six thousand poor Protestants under a grievous Oppression, at the Mercy of their Enemies, in continual fear of courser and more severe Usage from their unreconcilable Enemies of *Rome*.

When we consider how sincere and stedfast they have been to our Religion, and their great Sufferings from time to time for their Profession, we have reason to esteem them. 'Tis to be proved by Record, that the Inhabitants of these Vallies have suffered three and thirty Persecutions for their Perswasion against Popery. And their Courage in their Defence hath been so remarkable, that tho Orders were sent from the Court of *France* to extirpate the Memory of the *Vandois*, they resisted so manfully, and prevailed with that Success, that *Catinat* the French General was forced to send them a Cartel, and grant them Articles of War as to Sovereign Princes. So that when about 14 of their Brethren were taken Prisoners in a certain Skirmish, they hearing they were threatened with Execution and hanging, sent word to the French Officers, that if they

they should put them to death, they would likewise hang thirty of the French then in their Custody; which Message put a stop to their Cruelty, and obliged the French to consent to an Exchange; by this means they were sent out of the French Prisons without the least harm or damage.

Thus having given you a brief and true, tho a strange and wonderful account, of the late Transactions, and brave Exploits of the *Vandois*, I shall only give you this seasonable Advice, for your better Encouragement to imitate the worthy Examples of these Couragious Men, in standing up for your Religion and Cause, whenever the like occasion may happen among us.

In the first place, let us consider and admire the great and miraculous Providence of God, in preserving and raising up King *William* for our happy Deliverance from an Arbitrary Power, even at that very juncture of time, when our Lives, our Estates, our Liberties, our Laws, our Religion, and all that seem'd to contribute either to our Temporal or Spiritual Happiness, lay at stake.

Secondly; Let us continually meditate upon, and keep in our Remembrance his many wonderful Escapes (since his first Accession to the Crown) from the bloody Conspiracies of his malicious Enemies, which were so nearly effected upon his sacred Person, that nothing but the infinite Wisdom and Power of Almighty God could have discovered, or defeated them. In short, let the sense of these, and all other God's Favours to us, together with the fervent Affections that are thereby kindled in some, tho not in all our Hearts, never cool, or sink down into Forgetfulness, or Ingratitude; but rather let 'em produce in every one of us such firm Resolutions of a future Thankfulness and Obedience, that we may constantly persevere in the same; and in imitation of the Examples of these stout *Vandois*, stand up for the Honour of our Master Christ, when the Interest of his Religion shall require it: for it seems it was not only for their self-preservation that they behaved themselves thus couragiously, and that all these forementioned Severities were imposed upon them, but it was chiefly to vindicate the Truth of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus, without
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the real doing of which, we do not in the least answer the prohibitious Ends of Divine Providence to us; neither can we ever reasonably expect any Favour at his hands.

In order therefore to a business of so great Importance, let us wholly abandon those crying Sins of the Nation, which do justly deserve the Vengeance of an offended God; perpetually yielding unto our Gracious Sovereign all true Loyalty and Obedience: so shall we be the better qualified to maintain our Cause and Rights against all Invasions whatsoever; and all our Undertakings of this kind will undoubtedly be attended with a Divine Assistance. I might add a great deal more upon this occasion, but I shall omit it, and only tell you, that I admire at the Inconsiderancy of some Men that bore great sway in the late Reign, that were, and do still seem to be zealous Professors of the Protestant Religion, yet do continue utterly averse to the present Government: Whatever may be in the Minds of these People, God knows: but this is most certain, that by a Revolution, which they do so earnestly desire, we that are sincerely of that Profession, can expect nothing but a total Deprivation of all that we now enjoy. Let us therefore, I say, that are thoroughly sensible of the wonderful things (notwithstanding our Unworthiness and many Provocations) that God has all along done for us in our Preservation from our Enemies, remain grateful and obedient, and shew forth his Praise from Generation to Generation.

Amen.

FINIS.